



FEBRUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

February

By the time this newsletter reaches you, hopefully we are beginning to see signs of the Spring weather and longer daylight hours. As usual we have a busy agenda of meetings, forums and webinars so please do sign up for anything that you are interested in and share with colleagues of any related discipline and grade. If you can't attend on a day recordings can be found on our [Moodle site](#).



Become an STPN Member!

We would like any clinical staff, commissioners or other stakeholders within the South Thames Region to become a member of the [STPN](#). Your feedback is of value and impacts the work carried out within the network. It is important to us that the right information gets to the right people, becoming a member means you opt into comms you want to engage in. Scan the QR code to become a member.



Surgery in Children

Launching March 2026: STPN Play Specialist Forum

We're excited to announce the launch of the STPN Play Specialist Forum in March 2026 - a dedicated space designed to bring Play Specialists together from across the Network. This new forum will support collaboration, shared learning, and meaningful peer connection, helping to strengthen the role of play within our services.

Why join?

The forum has been created to:

- Reduce professional isolation
- Support colleagues managed within other professional disciplines
- Strengthen networking and collaborative working
- Share ideas, creativity, and good practice
- Enable collective problem-solving and peer support
- Share case studies and learning
- Support Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Contribute to consultation on affiliated workstreams and projects
- Ensure play is embedded within future service development

Whether you are looking to connect with peers, expand your knowledge, or help shape the future of play services, this forum will provide a welcoming and supportive environment.

Interested in joining?

We are currently building our contact list ahead of the launch. Register your interest using the link below or scan the QR code in the newsletter.

<https://forms.gle/3oG3YdFpEhhNHTcF9>



Forum Lead Opportunity

We are also looking for a Play Specialist from a DGH to join the forum's leadership team, working alongside two existing co-leads from tertiary centers. This balanced leadership approach will help capture a wide range of perspectives, supporting the development of a forum that is meaningful and beneficial for Play Specialists across the Network.

If you are passionate about advancing play services and would like to help shape this new forum, we would love to hear from you. Please get in touch at england.stpn@nhs.net to express your interest or find out more.

NEW: STPN Emergency Airway Guidance launching this week

We are pleased to announce the upcoming launch of the STPN Emergency Airway Guidance, developed to support the safe and effective management of paediatric airways across all STPN acute sites.

Designed for all clinical teams involved in elective and emergency airway management, including anaesthetists, ENT surgeons, and multidisciplinary teams working in Emergency Departments, PICU, theatres, and ward. This guidance provides a clear, structured approach to recognising, planning for, and managing difficult paediatric airways.

Why was this guidance developed?

Unanticipated paediatric airway emergencies are rare but carry significant morbidity and mortality risks. This guidance responds directly to national safety findings and recommendations, highlighting the need for greater consistency in identifying high-risk patients, ensuring early specialist involvement, standardising equipment, and strengthening training across the network.

Key benefits include:

- A standardised approach to difficult paediatric airway management across STPN
- Clear criteria for identifying high-risk patients and recognising red flags
- Strong emphasis on oxygenation and early planning for potential failure
- Guidance on the use of video laryngoscopy and supraglottic airways
- Early collaboration with ENT teams
- Improved team communication, defined leadership roles, and use of cognitive aids
- Practical tools including checklists, equipment guidance, and algorithms
- Recommendations for training and simulation to build workforce confidence

This guidance represents an important step toward improving patient safety, supporting clinical decision-making, and promoting a consistent, high-quality response to paediatric airway emergencies across the network.

We encourage all relevant teams to review the document and incorporate the guidance into local practice to help strengthen preparedness and enhance patient outcomes.

Access the Guidance:

The full guidance document and supporting resources will be available shortly.

For further information or queries, please contact england.stpn@nhs.net



Pediatric Critical Care

Events



The first TRI PICU meeting of 2026 was held on the 21st January 2026 hosted by The Evelina Children's Hospital PICU. The meeting is an opportunity for all the PICU's within the STPN to come together for shared learning and networking. The focus of the January meeting was on the Patient safety and incident response framework (PSIRF). The morning provided a platform for shared learning, on how each unit had implemented the PSIRF framework through case presentation.

The next TRI PICU/Winter wash up is on the 25 March 2026

STPN PCC team updates



Sarah Levitt

Lead Nurse Paediatric Critical Care

Sarah Levitt has returned at the end of January from Maternity leave to her role as Lead Nurse for Paediatric Critical Care for the STPN.



Sarah Herbert

Lead Nurse Digital National Nursing Competencies

Sarah Herbert will be supporting with the implementation of the Digital National Nursing competencies. And will also continue to support PCC education.

Epilepsy update

As part of our Epilepsy workstream we updated a ['Guide for Schools'](#) which is of value to any services across our Network, not just London schools (as on title page). Please share with your clinical and education colleagues.



Epilepsy in Schools
Guide 2024 final.pdf

Education Update

@thames_south | Linktree

The STPN clinical educators are expecting to be very busy in 2026! We recently sent out an education newsletter. Please email england.stpn@nhs.net if you would like a copy.



Education to Support the Launch of the Paediatric Emergency Airway Guidance

We now have teams from 9 network trusts booked in for our face to face Emergency Airway study days which means we are at capacity. You can still learn more about the guidance at our free webinar taking place on 11th February. [Click this link](#) or scan the QR code in the poster to register.

Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams

Free STPN Lunchtime Webinar
Wed 11th February
12.30 - 1.30pm

South Thames Paediatric Network
 Transforming Healthcare for Children and Young People

Scan the QR code or use this link to register:
<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/f4f80021-27bd-42d3-8c15-73691ea9bbce@37c354b2-85b0-47f5-b222-07b48d774ee3>

STPN Paediatric Emergency Airway Guidance Launch

The guidance suggests ways to anticipate and plan for a difficult intubation in an emergency situation.

- Forward planning and preparation for an emergency event.
- In situ planning including access to the right people and equipment at the right time.
- Prioritisation of oxygenation.

Suitable for the whole MDT

Speaker
 Dr Joanne Perkins
 Paediatric Intensive Care Consultant and Paediatric Anaesthetist Consultant
 Evelina Children's Hospital

On behalf of the STPN Emergency Airway guidance working group

Certificates available on completion of feedback

@thames_south | Linktree

Paediatric Palliative Care Simulation Study days

New for 2026 - Paediatric Palliative Care Simulation study days. These days are a collaboration between STPN, the network's specialist palliative care teams and local Hospitals and hospices. They are open to all members of the MDT working at the hosting hospital or in the surrounding area. If you are interested in attending a day near you or would like to host a day in 2027, please email england.stpn@nhs.net



Paediatric Palliative Care Simulation Study Day

A collaboration between STPN, Evelina palliative care team, the SPACE and COAST teams and the Royal Alexandra Children's hospital.

Taught by palliative care experts and experienced debriefers. Suitable for all members of the MDT.

Learning outcomes linked to RCPCH competencies and the RCN children's palliative care competencies.

Advance care planning
 Symptom management
 From diagnosis to end of life care

A chance to practice in a safe space
 Signposting and advice
 Taking care of ourselves

Royal Alexandra Hospital, Sussex **Mon 9th Feb**
 Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Woolwich **Date TBC**
 St Peter's Hospital, Surrey **Thurs 4th June**
 William Harvey Hospital, Kent **Wed 23rd Sept**

To express interest in attending or find out more email england.stpn@nhs.net **Price: £50 per person**



Education Forum and Practice Development Nurse Away Day

In previous years we have had separate practice development nurse and MDT education forums but we found there was quite an overlap between the two. This year we are combining them into one super education forum! The forum is open to any member of the MDT who has an interest in education. Please email us to be added to the invitation list.

We want to continue to offer something special for our practice development nurse colleagues so we will be repeating our very successful Practice Development Nurse Away Day. A free day for nurses in education roles to come together and share successes and challenges.



Practice Development Nurse Away Day

Following the success of last years event, STPN are pleased to offer a face to face day open to all Paediatric PDN's in the Network.

Including specialist speakers and discussions.
Agenda TBC

"A really well organised day - all talks relevant and really well delivered"

"It was so lovely to meet as a group!"

Date: 9th June 2026
09:30 -16:30
Location: York Road, London SE1 7NJ

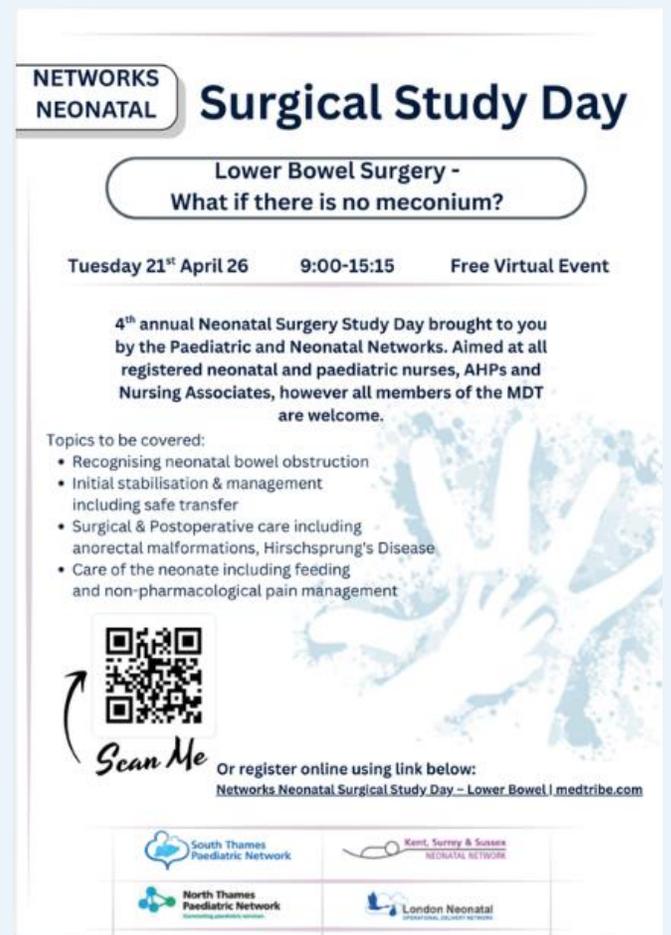
Scan the QR code to book a place

FREE ENTRY

South Thames Paediatric Network
Incorporating Healthcare for Children and Young People

5th Annual Neonatal Surgical Study Day (in association with NTPN, London Neonatal Network and Kent, Surrey and Sussex Neonatal Network)

A free virtual study day for paediatric and neonatal staff. This year's focus is anorectal anomalies. Including discussion of paediatric ongoing management. Scan the QR code to register:



NETWORKS NEONATAL

Surgical Study Day

Lower Bowel Surgery - What if there is no meconium?

Tuesday 21st April 26 9:00-15:15 Free Virtual Event

4th annual Neonatal Surgery Study Day brought to you by the Paediatric and Neonatal Networks. Aimed at all registered neonatal and paediatric nurses, AHPs and Nursing Associates, however all members of the MDT are welcome.

Topics to be covered:

- Recognising neonatal bowel obstruction
- Initial stabilisation & management including safe transfer
- Surgical & Postoperative care including anorectal malformations, Hirschsprung's Disease
- Care of the neonate including feeding and non-pharmacological pain management

Scan Me

Or register online using link below:
[Networks Neonatal Surgical Study Day - Lower Bowel | medtribe.com](#)

South Thames Paediatric Network Kent, Surrey & Sussex NEONATAL NETWORK

North Thames Paediatric Network London Neonatal OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

Much more in the Education Newsletter!

For even more education news and upcoming opportunities - including the CVAD train the trainer day in June, topics for upcoming STPN webinars and the opportunity to hold an STPN critical care SIM Day at your hospital please ask for a copy of our education newsletter. And don't forget our online education content at moodle.stpn.uk, [YouTube South Thames Paediatric Network channel](#) and the [STPN podcast series](#) - available wherever you get your podcasts.

Pan Thames Paediatric Long Term Ventilation Programme updates

Pan Thames Paediatric LTV Programme



**North Thames
Paediatric Network**
Connecting paediatric services



**South Thames
Paediatric Network**
Transforming Healthcare for
Children and Young People



Pan Thames Paediatric LTV Clinical Lead (2 PAs/8h per week) Expressions of Interest

We're seeking a senior clinician to lead the Pan Thames Paediatric Long-Term Ventilation (LTV) Programme (2026–2029). The role centres on strengthening LTV pathways, improving timely flow and consistent care, and supporting system wide improvement across London, Surrey, Sussex, Kent and bordering East of England Trusts.

What you'll do: Provide visible regional clinical leadership by chairing key meetings across PICU, NICU, DGH and LTV teams; strengthening early identification at a strategic level by engaging with acute services to understand pressures and emerging needs; driving timely, consistent discharge planning; offering data informed clinical assurance; and acting as a senior ambassador across ICBs and national forums, while working closely with the programme team and proactively building relationships with clinical stakeholders to represent their views.

Who should apply: Registered Consultant/Senior Nurse/AHP with leadership experience in LTV/Critical care/Complex paediatrics, strong stakeholder skills and commitment to equity and high-quality care.

How to apply (by midnight Sun 1 March 2026): Submit an endorsed Expression of Interest letter and CV (confirming release of **2 PAs/8h per week for 3 years**) to m.cabib@nhs.net cc gstt.panthamesltv@nhs.net

Proposed interview date: 16 March. Informal queries welcome.

Full job description available here: [Expression of Interest Pan-Thames Paediatric LTV Clinical Lead \(2026–2029 2PAs or 8h/week\)](#)



Our mailing address is: england.stpn@nhs.net

Network Manager: Sally Watts

Contact: 07918338799



If you no longer wish to receive these emails you can [unsubscribe](#) from this list.